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ABSTRACT

The East Longmeadow/University of Massachusetts Professional Development School collaborative began in 1985 as a collaborative effort to transform East Longmeadow High School into the equivalent of a teaching hospital for preservice teachers. Eventually Birchland Park Middle School (Massachusetts) joined the project. The objective has been to develop a professional development school (PDS) teacher education program that would allow university and school faculty to collegially design and carry out a rational student teaching experience for a cohort of student teachers at a PDS. The program has the following basic components: (1) placement of a cohort of student teachers at the PDS site; (2) developing a community of mentors; (3) on-site instruction for student and mentor teachers at the PDS site; (4) planning, assessment, and training workshops; (5) exchange of faculty resources; and (6) professional development projects carried out by individual and small groups of mentor faculty. This handbook is written for mentor teachers. It is designed to provide guidelines on the mentoring process and is based on the individual and collective experiences of the mentors in the East Longmeadow clinical site program. (IAH)

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MENTORING HANDBOOK

EAST LONGMEADOW / UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SCHOOL

SP033337

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Introduction

This handbook is written for mentor teachers. It is designed to provide guidelines on the mentoring process and is based on the individual and collective experiences of the mentors in the East Longmeadow clinical site program.

The Mentoring Handbook was conceived and written by the following members of the East Longmeadow/University of Massachusetts Professional Development School.

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<u>East Longmeadow/University of Massachusetts School of Education Clinical Site Program: A Collaborative Effort</u>

by

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BACKGROUND OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SCHOOL PROGRAM

The East Longmeadow-University of Massachusetts Professional Development School collaborative began in 1985. The original initiative for the program came from Peter Cannone, then Principal of East Longmeadow High School and now Associate Superintendent of the district. Sensing an impending shortage of teachers, and responding to a need to reinvigorate a veteran faculty, he invited the Secondary Teacher Education Program (STEP) of the University of Massachusetts at Amherst to join East Longmeadow staff in a collaborative effort to transform East Longmeadow High School into the equivalent of a "teaching hospital". By responding to needs they felt for the school, and by seeing the staff development possibilities of collaboration with the University, he anticipated the literature of the educational reform movement which was just then beginning to describe the concept of the Professional Development School.

The Secondary Teacher Education Program was dissatisfied with the conventional placement of student teachers in isolated schools. At many such sites, the dichotomy between the faculty of the School of Education and the faculty of the practicum site was reinforced rather than bridged. The STEP faculty saw the proposed collaboration as an opportunity to develop a relationship with ELHS Which would benefit university student teaching candidates in several ways:

a. student teachers would be welcomed by the entire high school faculty and staff;
b. student teachers would have maximum peer support by being placed in a cohort of up to 10 at the school;
c. the distant relationship between university and high school faculty would be turned into a collegial one in which the two faculties shared the goal of preparing new teachers.

Both partners in the collaborative believed that joining together in the preparation of new teachers would be a source of professional and intellectual renewal for their faculties.

Over the next few months Cannone met with Professor Earl Seidman of the School of Education to conceptualize the collaboration in teacher education between East Longmeadow High School and the Secondary Teacher Education Program. Dr. Helen Schneider of the School of Education joined the planning team at the critical first phase of implementation, and Cannone, Seidman and Schneider became co-directors of the project. Through initial meetings with interested ELHS faculty, a jointly planned pilot project emerged. Issues of mutual commitment, compatibility and respect were discussed, tested and proven sound.

Our initial efforts were supported by our being designated a pilot Professional Development School project by the Field Center for Teaching and Learning, the Fund for the Improvement of Post-secondary Education and the East Longmeadow School Committee This support allowed us to participate with six other projects across the Commonwealth exploring issues that are generic to the Professional Development School concept.

A major characteristic of the program is continued growth and development. Faculty from STEP and East Longmeadow High School and Birchland Park Middle School work together on the realities of the project, and each new development of the program has arisen organically from an earlier phase of the program. Twice a year, workshops provide the opportunity for major reviews and assessments of our progress to date, and the chance to brainstorm possibilites for new developments. (These workshops will be discussed more fully in the Evaluation section).

What follows is a description of our basic goals and objectives for the program and the components of the program we have developed to accomplish those goals.

Goals:

Building on our basic goal for this project, to bridge the dichotomy that often exists between university-based schools of education and the public schools. Our objective has been to develop a Professional Development Schoo teacher education program patterned to some degree upon the notion of a teaching hospital. Such a Professional Development School would allow university and high school faculty to collegially design and carry out a rational student teaching experience for a cohort of student teachers at a Professional Development School. Our fundamental intended outcomes are:

1. for student teachers to feel welcome and supported by the entire high school and middle school;
2. for student teachers to gain the benefits of the experience of a cadre of mentor teachers;
3. for mentor teachers to feel less individual isolation in their professional work;
4. for mentor teachers to have the opportunity to share their years of experience with prospective teachers and feel a sense of intellectual and professional opportunity in the project;
5. for School of Education faculty and staff to be able to carry out a more effective student teaching program in collaboration with colleagues in the high school and middle school promoting coherence between what student teachers learn at the university and in the schools;

6. for members of the collaboration to help develop additional professional development school sites, using the leadership and experience of the East Longmeadow mentors;
7. to contribute to the developing concepts of mentoring and of professional development schools in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts as we move to the implementation of the recommendations for the Joint Task Force on Teacher Preparation and prepare for full implementation of the role of mentor under the new certification guidelines;

To achieve these desired outcomes, we have developed a collaborative program that has the following basic components:

1. Placement of a "cohort" of student teachers at the professional development school site. Note: numbers alone do not make a cohort. A basic component of the program is developing a sense of community within the student teaching cohort and between them and the faculty, staff, and students of the schools.

2. Developing a community of mentors: The second essential ingredient of the program is developing a cadre of experienced mentor teachers who work individually and as a group to support and teach the student teachers at this critical phase of their teacher education. Essential to the development of this community is the opportunity for the mentor teachers to reflect on their experience, explore the research and literature on mentoring and teacher education, and share that reflection and exploration with their colleagues and the student teachers.

3. Basic to the development of a sense of community among student teachers and mentors, and the collaboration between university and school faculty is on-site instruction at ELHS/BPMS. Central to the Professional. Development School project in East Longmeadow are two on-site seminars: one for the student teachers and one for the mentor teachers, both co-taught by school and university faculty. These seminars held at East Longmeadow public schools provide the forum for mentor faculty to develop their perspectives and skills and for student teachers to process their experiences and have access to mentors as resources for their growth and development.

4. Planning, Assessment, and Training workshops. Twice per year, ELHS/BPMS faculty and University faculty come together in workshops to review the progress of the program to

date, make suggestions for revisions, plan for new developments, and receive and give instruction on issues of mentoring. Student Teachers attend workshops during the academic year which are sometimes held at the mutually convenient site at the conference center at Mount Holyoke College. During the summer months additional sessions are conducted on the campus of the University.

5. Exchange of faculty resources: In addition to on-site instruction carried out by university and public school faculty, faculty from ELHS/BPMS take part on the university campus in teacher education courses both as guest lecturers and as regular members of the instructional staff. Faculty from the university offer workshops for public school faculty. In addition, a growing number of mentor faculty from the East Longmeadow High School and Birchland Park Middle School are seeking advanced degrees at the university and other institutions of higher education.

6. Professional Development Projects: At this stage in the program, individual and small groups of mentor faculty, in conjunction with university faculty, are developing a series of projects designed to further develop and refine the efforts of the professional development site. The projects listed below are a response to perceived needs of the program and carry the possibility of graduate credit:
   a. The preparation by the mentors of a handbook on mentoring
   b. A video-tape designed to explore and illuminate alternative models of teaching.
   c. a video-tape designed to document the history, structure and workings of the program.
   d. an expanded program of pre-practicum on site field experiences.

Over the next three years we need to foster the development of the components listed above, support efforts at dissemination and assist in the development of Professional Development School projects by other institutions of higher education. The EL/UMA collaborative has resulted in mentor faculty gaining considerable experience and insight into the complexities, problems, and possibilities of a professional development site. Mentor faculty from East Longmeadow have been active in supporting STEP's efforts to develop additional professional development school sites: one an urban site in Holyoke Public Schools and the other at Greenfield High School. In addition, our collaborative is beginning to play a supporting role in other higher education institutional planning for professional development efforts.

Our program components are designed to accomplish the following: place special emphasis on reflective inquiry and explore alternative models of teaching; use involvement in pre-service teacher education as a vehicle of professional development for experienced teachers; stress the role of experienced teachers as mentors for new teachers, and use the resources of the public school to develop an on-site teacher education program that then promotes change and reform of both school and university curriculum and teaching methods.

In the first five years we have accomplished a great deal in our project. Seventy student teachers have graduated from the site and have enjoyed a high rate of placement in teaching positions. Over thirty faculty and administrators at the high school and middle school have participated in the program and have received preparation to be mentors. We have had the privilege of making presentations on our efforts at national, regional, and state conferences.*

*See Appendix for a list of Professional Development School Participants

II. ROLES OF THE MENTOR

A review of the literature indicates that the following five mentor roles are important in a teacher training program:

1. **Role Model**
   The mentor serves as a role model for teacher professionalism, including a positive attitude towards teaching as a career; classroom teaching effectiveness; relationships with colleagues, administrators and parents; and commitment to professional development.

2. **Resource Person**

   The mentor orients the intern to the school faculty, staff and facilities and to curriculum and resource materials. The mentor should also introduce the new teacher to relevant professional organizations, seminars, conventions and publications. In addition, the mentor serves as a resource for planning and instruction, a range of teaching styles and strategies, approaches to classroom management, organization of paperwork, student evaluation, and effective communication with parents.

3. **Observer/Coach**

   The mentor assists in the intern's learning process as an observer and a coach. The mentor observes and offers feedback to the student teacher which builds on areas of strength, indentifies areas of weakness and helps the intern to set goals that provide direction for development of essential practices and skills.

4. **Support Person**

   The mentors serves as a sounding board for feelings of frustration, anger, overwork and perceived failure. They also share feelings of satisfaction and success over a job well done. Empathy, patience and the ability to listen are critically important in this aspect of the mentor's role. The mentor's initial task will be to help the intern build self-confidence, develop positive work habits and be effective in their own classroom.

5. **Liaison**

   The mentor has the responsibility for collaboration with the supervisor from the university. The triad -- mentor, intern and supervisor -- work together through formal and informal meetings to make the experience a positive and productive one.

6. Time Management

The Mentor's job is very demanding and time consuming. A mentor needs to examine weekly schedules and how to use time, when to plan lessons, duplicate materials, organize materials, correct papers and the many other things that occupy the day. Of course, it is important to have free time scheduled. By knowing how a mentor spends time one is better able to help a student teacher adjust to the busy school schedule.

The mentor and student teacher then need to plan their schedules together on a regular basis. This coordination of schedules will help both the student teacher and mentor work out inevitable conflicts, weekly changes, and so on. For example, student teachers may have additional meetings to attend and these should be known to the mentor. Also, the mentor may be inundated in professional and inservice requirements at irregular intervals. Therefore, weekly planning between both parties is essential.

Finally, carefully developed schedules may be particularly helpful to a new teacher who needs to learn how to conserve time, make time and manage time effectively.

III. STATE STANDARDS THAT MUST BE MET BY THE INTERN (1982-94)**

The common standards outlined below are guidelines that define the qualifications student teachers must meet to become certified as teachers in their fields.

Standard I

The effective teacher is knowledgeable in the field proposed for certification. (The competencies required to meet this standard are listed under each classroom teaching certificate.)

Standard II

The effective teacher communicates clearly, understandably, and appropriately.

Standard III

The effective teacher designs instruction to facilitate learning consistent with the needs and interests of the learners and so as to maintain a sense of order and purpose in the classroom.

Standard IV

The effective teacher uses the results of various evaluative procedures to assess the effectiveness of instruction.

Standard V

The effective teacher is equitable, sensitive, and responsive to all learners.

*See appendix for more detailed material on each standard. The Appendix also includes the Secondary Teacher Education Program Cooperating Teacher's Handbook which contains other state and School of Education requirements that mentors should be familiar with.

**New Standards now being developed will supersede those outlined here on October 1. 1994.

IV. TYPICAL STUDENT TEACHER TIME-LINE

1. Selection process (midway through the semester prior to student teaching)
2. Preliminary meeting between new intern and mentor immediately after selection
3. Orientation (first day of student teaching)
4. First 3-way meeting
5. Observations of mentor and other mentors (intensively in first week to ten days)
6. Co-teaching with mentor (approximately second week)
7. Intern takes over first class (Approximately 2 weeks)
8. Second class added - Second 3 way meeting (approximately mid-semester)
9. Third class added (decided at a consultation meeting among mentor, student teacher and supervisor)
10. Transitional activities - (last week to ten days) Return to co-teaching; additional observations of mentors; wrap-up of course plans and grades.
11. Final 3-way meeting
12. Graduation

NOTE: Other mandatory duties are to be assumed within a reasonable time frame. They are as follows:

1. Designated late night once per week
2. All faculty meetings
3. All department meetings
4. All release time-day activities
5. Homeroom
6. Study halls

7. Special activities as they arise (assemblies, field day etc). Participation in extra-curricular activities is encouraged as appropriate.

- Throughout this experience outlined above, the student teacher is responsible for arrival to and departure from duty station at the same time as staff members.

- Substitute teaching with compensation may be possible after 35 days of student teaching experience.

V. SELECTION PROCESS OF STUDENT TEACHER

Because the student teacher/mentor relationship is at the very heart of a successful mentoring experience, it is vital to stress the importance of the student teacher selection process. First, some basic observations:

1. Once a student teacher is on board and part of the program, it is difficult and arguably even unfair to remove that person unless extreme conditions prevail; hence the importance of careful selection.

2. The selection process is a two-way street; the student teacher is selecting a school and a mentor that seem to meet his/her needs.

3. Within each department, the selection process will become a team effort within the department. Each prospective mentor will have full access to all information pertaining to selection

4. If there are more student teachers applying than positions available, it clearly means disappointment for someone. Tact and diplomacy are in order.

5. The selection process is an imperfect vehicle at best. Nevertheless, if the mentor adheres to the following format, the chances of a good match are significantly improved.

A. **The large pre-practicum group visit.**

When the busload of pre-practicum university students (i.e. students enrolled in Ed. courses, but not yet seeking placement as student teachers) arrives for their day-long visit, there are usually (but not always) several potential student teachers in the group. This is a good opportunity for both mentors and student teachers to make initial contacts. The more face to face contact the mentor can get before sealing the match, the more informed the decision.

B. **Pre-practicum student teacher program.**

If the proposed pre-practicum student teacher program becomes a reality, there is probably no better way for mentor and student teacher to get to know each other than to work together one day a week for several weeks. For example, a pre-practicum in the fall would be the ideal lead-in to a full student teachership in the spring.

C. **Paperwork screening.**

Prospective student teachers make their formal application to the program by submitting a written application package to the appropriate department through the University of Massachusetts contacts. This package includes a transcript, a letter of intent, a resume, and recommendations if available. Mentors can also request special paperwork; an essay answer to a specific question, for example.

Scrutinize your applications carefully. Academic achievement is obviously important. Don't overlook appearance of the documentation. Make notes about the package that can be pursued in the interview. Better to be over-cautious than rushed and cursory.

D. **Communication with UMass personnel.**

This is a step in the selection process that is often overlooked. Remember that these students have already made impressions on their university teachers. At this point in the process, the UMass staff know these people better than we do. A few telephone calls could reap valuable information.

E. The Interview

This is probably the most important and at the same time the most difficult stage of the selection process. Give it your full attention, and take plenty of time, perhaps a whole day. Invite the prospective student teacher to follow you through the day; take lunch together; be frank and open. Notice how the prospective student teacher functions as an observer; is she/he attentive? Remember your goal is a dialogue; you can't learn much if you control all the questioning and interaction.

Here are some especially important issues you'll want to explore:

1. What about compatibility? The mentor/student teacher relationship is laden with issues of power, authority, ownership and evaluation. These factors can be complicated or enhanced by issues of race, class, gender. Try to ask questions that will get at the student teacher's personal style. Don't forget to be candid about your own style.

2. Try to get a feel for the student teacher's work ethic. Be frank about your expectations; stress the fact that some conditions are non-negotiable. Remember that you are taking on a student teacher; can that "student" accept and implement assignments?

3. What about the maturity level? Consider the fact that this person is in transition from student/university life to the "work world." Is this the student teacher's first full-time job experience?

4. Talk at length about subject matter. Look not only for depth but also for a level of commitment. Will this person be willing to address the inevitable academic gaps? Relate this part of the interview directly to the college transcript.

5. How about logistics? Can the student teacher get here on time? What will the transportation arrangements look like? Will after school duty be a hardship?

6. Is this person a team player? Will she/he relate successfully to your colleagues and the administration? Will he/she be able to function as part of a cohort? And here's the big one: can this person accept and use constructive criticism?

F. Sharing of a Student Teacher

Sharing a student teacher is not uncommon. The rationale is usually to ensure that a student teacher teaches courses necessary for certification or to assure that a given class or teacher does not have a student teacher more than once per year. Additionally, by sharing student teachers working with more than one mentor are exposed to a greater variety of teaching styles.

Sharing requires that there be a teacher of record (primary mentor). The student teacher has two of her/his classes with the primary mentor. These are usually the intern's first two classes.

The Primary mentor has all responsibilities as outlined in Section II. The secondary mentor should be included in the triad once the student teacher becomes involved with her/his class. It is necessary that communication and collaboration between the two mentors be stressed so that the student teacher's experience remains as positive and consistent as possible.

G. Final Steps.

Soon after the interview step a final decision must be made. It is important to remember that prospective student teachers who don't secure spots here will need time to seek positions elsewhere. Don't keep them hanging.

In addition inform those selected and those not selected personally by phone, and inform the university representative of your choices.

Immediately set up time to meet again with the student teacher you have selected. Give her/him copies of your textbooks and detailed curriculum information. Give out specific assignments with dates for completion. You're on your way!

VI PRELIMINARY DISCUSSION AND PREPARATION SELECTED STUDENT TEACHERS

Once the pre-practicum and interview processes have taken place, it should be easier for the mentor to decide which of the candidates will best complement his or her own particular classroom style. When the new student teacher has been notified of selection, it is essential to set up a meeting to discuss the basic ground rules between mentor and student teacher. This meeting should not be hurried or routine; in fact, the most ideal situation may be to have the new student teacher spend the entire day talking with and observing the prospective mentor. During this preliminary meeting the following things should be discussed.

A. Curricula

The student teacher should understand fully what the school's curriculum requirements are and what specific areas he or she will be expected to teach. At this time any books or notes should be provided so that the student teacher can become familiar with the material before the start of the semester.

B. Grading Policies

Grading is a volatile issue that may cause tension and uncertainty between mentors, interns and students in the classroom. Therefore, a frank discussion of this issue during the preliminary discussion can help avoid differences of opinion at the end of the marking period.

C. Particular Expectations

This is a time to clarify what will be important to both mentor and intern in the running of the classes. Many good ideas have come from our interns; the sooner the mentor and intern come to an understanding on day-to-day preferences and policies, the sooner that special collaboration of ideas can take place.

It is important to reiterate that this meeting must take place before the first day of the intern's semester experience. To wait until the semester begins to iron out important details is to risk misunderstanding later on.

VII. ORIENTATION OF STUDENT TEACHER

The day before the new student teacher's first full day in class is largely taken up with an intensive two hour orientation. This session is conducted by co-directors from East Longmeadow and the university. Bcause this is the first time the student teachers assemble as a group, activities are planned that begin to bring them together as a cohort. At this time student teachers also receive basic supplies including a grade book and a plan book. An agenda for the orientation follows on the next page. Some of the topics that receive special emphasis are:

1. The sequence and process of student teachers assuming classes.
2. Observation expectations.
3. Relations with students: Friendly vs. making friends.
4. A caution that students will "test" student teachers.
5. The student teacher's conduct as a role model.
6. Making the transition from student to teacher.
7. The notion that we mentors can learn from the student teachers.
8. Expectations concerning arrival and departure times.
9. Procedures in case of illness.
10. Appropriate dress and grooming.
11. Treating school support staff with respect.

Even though these issues are stressed in the orientation, they are important enough for the mentor to reinforce soon after the student teacher's arrival. Misunderstandings relative to these topics can definitely lead to problems during the student teachership.

A packet of materials is issued similar to the one received by teachers at the opening of school.

1. Schedule cards
2. Help nights
3. Sports schedule
4. Student body profiles
5. Maps
6. Course Weightings
7. SPED philosophy
8. Lunch schedules
9. No-School policy
10. Point system sheet
11. Calendars
12. Vision statement
13. Student teacher/mentor list
14. Program of Studies
15. List of BPMS academic teams
16. Detention policy
17. Homework room policy
18. Student Handbooks

VIII. OBSERVATIONS BY STUDENT TEACHERS

Observation of the Mentor

One of the most important elements of the student teacher experience involves observation of the mentor teacher. Most of this observation takes place at the beginning of the semester, usually during the first and second weeks, but it should be pointed out that this is an ongoing process. The initial observations familiarize the student teachers with the workings of the particular classes they are planning to teach. Watching before "jumping into the job", the student teacher has an opportunity to learn the students' names and adjust to the class routine. Also, issues related to timing and style can be better understood by observing another teacher at work. Being with the students every day should make the student teacher more comfortable in front of the class when it comes time to assume teaching responsibilities.

Observation of Others

In the course of this program, we have found that there is great benefit in encouraging student teachers to observe not only their own mentors but other members of the faculty as well and in fact, it is now policy to require the student teachers to observe at least one mentor in every department. We therefore require student teachers to observe every mentor in their department at both the high school and middle school level. In addition to becoming familiar with the school and other staff members, this extended observation presents the opportunity to view various teaching styles. The style of a particular mentor may not coincide with that of one's student teacher; this observation gives the student teacher a chance to see alternatives. These observations can be done throughout the semester experience. We have come to realize that scheduling some of them at the end of the semester is a learning experience in itself; once the student teacher has had some time in front of the classroom, watching other teachers once again can clarify issues which may not have been evident at the beginning. In addition student teachers are encouraged to observe each other to establish the possibility for peer coaching and team teaching.

Discussion

Discussions after these observations can be very helpful; and are strongly encouraged. "What did you see that you can use?" "How did this observation fit in or differ from your own particular style?" "How would you have taught the same material?" "How did these students differ from those you have been teaching yourself?" All of these questions and many more can be a valuable way to make the observations one more learning experience for the student teacher.

IX. Co-teaching

One of the expectations of the Project is Co-teaching* between mentor and student teacher. While this can happen at any time in the student teacher's stay, the best opportunities occur at the beginning and end of the mentoring process.

Co-teaching as the very first teaching experience for the student teacher has the following advantages:

1. Serves as a smoother transition for students from one teacher to another.
2. Allows for an authentic teaching experience before The student teacher actually takes over the class.
3. Gives the student teacher credibility in the eyes of the students.
4. Promotes the all-important dialogue between mentor and student teacher as they plan and implement together.
5. Encourages a more candid relationship between mentor and student teacher as they succeed and fail together.
6. Aids in defusing the bonding between the class and the mentor, bonding which can be very difficult for the student teacher to overcome.

Co-teaching is also very valuable at the end of the student teacher's stay. Here are some of the pluses:

1. Serves as a good transition for the mentor to return to his/her classes.
2. Frees up the student teacher for some very valuable observing in other classrooms.
3. Provides a good opportunity for the mentor and student teacher to develop group work and projects and other innovative teaching methods.

IMPORTANT NOTE

In addition to the above advantages, Co-teaching serves as a partial response to our most vulnerable and sensitive issue, i.e., a perceived impact on the students by replacing an experienced teacher with an inexperienced student teacher. Co-teaching allows for more total contact time between the mentor and his students and also gives students two resources for questions, extra-help, and make-up (the "two for the price of one" argument). In summary, well planned Co-teaching should promote the perception that the mentor is never totally "out of touch."

* Co-teaching, here, does not mean two people simply taking turns teaching a class. What it does mean is two teachers planning, implementing, and evaluating a class together.

X. IMPORTANT AREAS TO COVER WITH STUDENT TEACHER

A. Principal's office

An important orientation experience for student teachers is a first-hand exposure to the principal's office. One of the Assistant Principals is the major contact person for the student teachers. He/she will discuss the following orientation items:

1. What are the Principal's and Assistant Principal's function in the school as resources?
   a. Includes a brief "shadowing" of Assistant principal.
   b. What happens in rountine discipline situations?
   c. Scheduling and grading procedures.
2. Review of school discipline policies.
3. Introduction to Principal's Office personnel.

The student teacher should make time (about two hours) for this orientation fairly early in the student teacher experience. **IT IS IMPORTANT TO NOTE THAT THE STUDENT TEACHER/MENTOR ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR SCHEDULING THIS ORIENTATION.**

B. Knowledge of Material

It has been said, "You never really know your subject until you have to teach it day after day." While the truth of this axiom becomes more obvious with each additional course the student teacher takes on, it is important for the mentor to emphasize the necessity of being very comfortable and familiar with the course material. Specific attention has to be given early and often, to areas which may not be the student teacher's specialty. (From a reading of the student teacher's transcript it is easy to ascertain what these areas are.) Every teacher has pockets of strength as well as weaknesses, and teaching experience goes a long way toward enhancing the one and minimizing the other. But it is especially important for the student teacher's credibility to create a first impression of competence regarding knowledge of material.

The mentor can do much to help the student teacher fill in the gaps in his or her knowledge. Many student teachers mistakenly believe that their college textbooks can serve as a main source of their reference material. What is most often the case, however, is that a college text is too specialized and too detailed for a course in the lower grades. The student teacher can be steered to any number of excellent reference materials espcially concentrating on these grades. Familiarity with the classroom text is essential also. The mentor can be a valuable source of knowledge and suggestions - the challenge is to find the right balance between providing enough assistance and enouraging a growing sense of independence and self-confidence regarding subject matter.

C. Planning

Your student teacher will need plenty of help in preparing plans ... both short term and long range. This is an area in which the two of you can work very closely together; it will be a critical area for judging overall success at the end of the student teacher's stay. Stress some key principles:

1. Planning really equals preparation and organization; there is no known substitute for it.
2. Students know and respect when a teacher prepares.
3. Good planning does not guarantee success in the classroom, but poor planning usually leads to failure or at least a poor performance.
4. Perhaps most important, there is a clear and direct link between good planning and good classroom discipline.

Long Range

Insist on clear long range plans from your student teacher. This is the best way to insure that all the necessary curriculum material is covered when the mentor is not in the classroom. Make the long range objectives clear; evaluate classroom performance against these goals regularly. This provides an extremely useful form of specific dialogue between student teacher and mentor.

Short Range

Review daily lesson plans with your student teacher sometime before and after a class. Keep a folder of lesson plans so that mentor and student teacher can discuss the "evolution" of planning together. This is truly the heart of the mentoring process.

Remember that student teachers want and need regular, candid, specific, and constructive input. It is our primary obligation as mentors.

NOTE: This whole process is a two way street, both mentor and student teacher can benefit.

D. Teaching Methods

A crucial step in the mentor's preparation of the student teacher for the transition into the classroom environment is the discussion of various teaching methods. Explain the types and illustrate them clearly. Discuss how they can best fit in with the materials to be studied and with the specific quirks of individual classes. Spend time talking about the possible strong and weak points of each. Stress the importance of matching methods to specific needs, and explain how alternatives are available if individual techniques do not work well. Show how a blend of types can often be an effective route. Above all, encourage the intern to experiment with a diversity of styles to determine the methods that feel the most comfortable. To eliminate problems such as inattentiveness, restlessness, defiance. etc. on the part of the students and to make the experience as positive as possible for the student teacher, it is important for the mentor to make the student teacher aware of the following techniques:

- lecture
- boardwork
- group work
- conferencing
- computer work
- individual seat work
- class discussion
- cooperative learning
- labwork

E. The Student/Student Teacher Relationship

The student teacher's relationship with the students should be warm and friendly, but the student teachers should not treat their students as they would their friends. Students should interact in a positive way with the student teachers but it is sometimes difficult for student teachers to realize the difference between being friendly and being a friend. The mentor should help the student teachers establish a positive relationship with the students to assure a positive experience for both students and student teachers.

It is important for the student teacher to realize that students might have a difficult time adapting to a different classroom environment. The student teacher must realize that subconsciously the students may resent the student teacher replacing their teacher. The mentor should help the student teacher become aware of the characteristics of each classroom to assure that drastic changes are not made.

1. It is important for the student teachers to learn to "read" their classes as quickly as possible. If the mentor finds that the student teacher is not aware of the differing personalities of the classes they will be teaching the mentor should meet with the student teacher to discuss class dynamics.

2. The student teacher should be aware that each student offers some positive input to the classroom. The student teacher must be open to designing specific alternatives for reaching these differing students.

3. The sooner the student teacher creates and maintains an interpersonal bridge with his/her students the more receptive the students will be to the student teacher. It is important for the mentor to urge the student teacher to immediately learn the names of each of his/her students and any important information that may help the student teacher and students to develop solid relationships.

4. The student teacher can develop interpersonal relationships with his/her students by bringing the students' thoughts and ideas into the learning, process, and thereby increase the students responsibility and involvement in the classroom.

5. Saying hello in the halls, general conversation, and similiar gestures all help to create and maintain an interpersonal relationship between student and student teacher. The student teacher should be made aware that these examples of communication skills between student teacher and student should be maintained on a friendly but professional level.

6. student teachers need to approach each class with it specific synamics in mind. Student teachers who experience in-attentive or disruptive students may find instructions, lectures, assignments, etc. are perhaps inappropriate and need to be re-structured

G. Classroom Management

Meaningful learning cannot thrive in a chaotic environment. Also, good classroom management can prevent major discipline problems down the road. Classroom management is the structure of the teaching process including both materials and methods, the way a teacher plans, organizes and directs his/her teaching activity. Obviously, it is necessary for the student teacher to be taught classroom management procedures as early as possible so that he/she can begin that first class with some concrete ideas on how to handle its various aspects.

1. Reading a Class:

The first priority is teaching the student teacher to "read the class." Each class, as well as each student and each teacher, has its own personality. student teachers should use their observation time to analyze class activities and gain an understanding of the interaction between teacher and student as well as the activity between student and student. Observation is not enough, however. Continual discussions between mentors and student teachers about specific class quirks must also take place.

a. Attention spans

Attention spans vary and student teachers must know how to identify individual attention spans, how to determine whether or not the whole class has a short attention span, and how to tell if it is a problem.

Help student teachers to plan class activities around such differences.

b. Student Relationships:

Group activities can be very effective, but they demand constant monitoring to keep students on task. Encourage student teachers to analyze the student to student relationships carefully and plan group activities accordingly.

2. Classroom Structure:

Student teachers must be shown that just studying the material is not enough. Basic guidelines of class operation and behavior must be established to promote a smooth learning process. Early on, the student teacher must observe the mentor's day to day operation of the class and discuss any unclear areas of classroom management with them. Plenty of conferencing before the student teacher takes over can prevent problems later. Spend the time to get the student teacher on your wavelength.

a. Monitoring:

From the day that the student teacher takes over the class, it is important for him/her to monitor student reactions continually. He/she must be taught how to gather data on class reactions to the different aspects of his procedures and direct things along with the flow. Eventually, he should be shown how to anticipate problems and thwart them before they grow.

b. Flexibility:

The flexibility of the teacher is an important aspect of the student - teacher relationship. If something does not work, it must be modified. Continually monitor the student teacher's handling of the various aspects of management, and if some aspect is failing, talk about alternatives immediately. Also, discuss the variety of ways to approach specific curriculum areas and the strong and weak points of each approach.

c. Caring:

Always stress caring about the kids. Encourage student teachers to be positive every day, to never demean anyone, to maintain a sense of humor, and to get involved with the kids. Care means things like helping students during free periods, returning assignments and tests as soon as possible, and monitoring students who are at risk.

Conclusion:

Discussing classroom dynamics factors ahead of time can point the student teaching experience in a positive direction, but good management also requires day-to-day monitoring. Mentors should keep a close watch on the student teachers and quickly address any problems that arise.

H. Discipline:

No matter how hard a teacher works to prevent problems, they will inevitably occur. First of all, educate the student teacher to distinguish between minor problems (which can be handled in class) and serious ones (which require office referral).Make sure the student teacher does not unwittingly create a fertile atmosphere for bad discipline. Explain to him that he must be in class on time, must prepare his lessons carefully, must show enthusiasm, and must keep the class involved in a variety of meaningful, understandable, student-centered activities.

1. Problems to be Addressed in the Classroom

The category of minor problems includes actions such as the following: lack of preparation for class (missing books, pencils, notebooks, homework, etc.) and minor class disruptions (talking, fooling around, leaving a seat, poking a neighbor, coming to class late, etc). Since most student teachers have never practiced discipline, they know very little about it. Sometimes, they get so focused on

their subject matter they just ignore classroom problems. Mentors and student teachers must have serious discussions about specific problems as early on as possible and often thereafter. Discipline must always be a priority in the student teacher's mind. After a reprimand, the student teacher must know enough to get back to the business of teaching as soon as possible and not allow negative feelings toward the offending student to last for the rest of his/her stay.

2. **Problems Requiring Office Refferal**

When classroom management fails and in-class discipline doesn't work, the student teacher must make a decision about whether the office should get involved. If the situation warrants it, the student teacher should not be fearful of sending the student out. If the class can't function, the offending party must be removed. Make student teachers realize that classtime is not playtime; proper discipline is necessary for effective classwork - period. Sometimes referrals to the office must be made. Encourage the student teacher not to feel embarrassed or guilty in such a situation. Any violent acts or injurious behavior whether physical or mental, whether involving an individual or involving others requires office intervention. Also, constant problem students must be dealt with in some way that goes beyond the scope of the classroom teacher. If normal methods do not work, the office is the alternative. Student teachers must realize that no class should be held hostage to a few unruly students.

3. **Parameters:**

In his/her first class, the student teacher should spell out the discipline parameters even if they are to be identical to those of his/her mentor. These should be discussed with the mentor in order to make the transition as painless as possible

4 . **Student Differences:**

Make student teachers realize that all students are different, and some have special problems that must be addressed. Connecting student teachers with Special Education people early to assure that students with special needs are discussed, without instilling biases against certain students.

5. **Alternatives:**

Explain your discipline (style) to the student teacher and have him/her observe several teachers in action to watch their discipline styles. The student teacher must weigh how the different types of discipline fit with his/her specific personality, and he/she must build his own discipline system. Also, make sure the student teacher realizes that dwelling on a problem will just make the situation worse and increase tension in the class. Stress that a middle ground between being too strict and too loose is best.

6. **Consistency and Fairness:**

Explain to the student teacher that each student must be handled in a similar fashion. Also, every punishment meted out sets a precedent, and if the second person who does the same thing wrong gets an easier deal, the first person is going to be bitter, and the whole class may look upon the teacher in a negative light because he/she can't be trusted.

7. **Responsibility:**

Student teachers may feel that being "buddies" with the class will improve the atmosphere, especially since some of them are close to the age of their students. Explain that the teacher must be in charge and must learn to insist on good behavior.

8. **Appropriate Punishment:**

Make sure that the student teacher knows the punishment must fit the offense. Discuss possible problems and realistic punishments in detail. Also, teach the student teacher to check the context of bad behavior. If a student is talking after being put in a group situation, it is natural. If he is talking during a test, however, it is a problem.

9. **Always on Duty:**

Finally, student teachers must realize that, like teachers, they are on duty at all times, and not just in the classroom. Ignoring problem behavior whenever and wherever it occurs is simply inappropriate professional behavior.

Conclusion:

The bottom line is that an student teacher, like all teachers, must have discipline constantly in the back of his/her mind. Such matters must be contemplated ahead of time, and definite, well thought out strategies must be devised and consistently employed.

I. GRADING

Most mentors in our program have come to feel that it is in the best interest of students, mentors and student teachers if the grading policy of the cooperating teacher is maintained. The student teaching experience can be a time to discuss various grading techniques. Because student teaching time in the school does not coincide with grading periods, it is best to remember that the student teacher is a welcome source of alternate teaching styles, resources and enthusiasm, but that her/his time is limited to fourteen weeks. Consistency seems to benefit the students in terms of grading policy.

Some time should be taken to make sure that the student teacher understands what policy is being followed. A

general explanation during the preliminary discussion is important. The following points should be stressed:

- It is vital that progress reports and grades be submitted on time.

- Progress reports written by the student teacher should be checked by the mentor to insure clarity and accuracy.

- Any correspondence to the administration or to parents regarding grades should be signed by both mentor and student teacher.

- Permanent records concerning any type of evaluation of a student should be kept by both parties.

When the marking period is winding down, a consultation between mentor and intern can guarantee that there is concurrence on the grade itself and the attendant comments about effort, conduct, etc. The mentor has the ultimate responsibility to the students, parents and administration and open communication helps to make grading disagreements unlikely

XI. OBSERVING A STUDENT TEACHER'S LESSON

One of the most difficult experiences for mentors is observing their student teachers' lessons. As teachers, we may never have had any training in observation and may be very uncomfortable doing it. It is easy to be critical when a lesson fails miserably, but what do we say when it is not quite right? We also need to be sure to give praise for a good lesson or portion of a class.

The following is a list of observable behaviors that are useful in evaluating effective teaching:

A. Utilization of Resources

Do student teachers use a variety of resources and models of teaching to assist their lessons? Are they able to give a rationale as to why they were selected?

B. Motivation Techinques

What methods are used to encourage students to do their best? Can a student teacher demonstrate a variety of strategies to achieve this? In addition, does the student teacher display enthusiasm for teaching and the subject matter? Do they act as role models for student behavior?

C. Communication Skills

Do student teachers exhibit knowledge of and sensitivity to verbal and non-verbal communications? Are the lessons clear to the students? Is enough time given to ensure that concepts are understood? Do the students demonstrate that the concepts were understood.

D. Questioning Skills

Is the student teacher aware of and can he/she demonstrate the following: redirection, wait time, prompting and probing? Are the questions factual or do they require students to use higher-order thinking skills? Are they clear and in the right sequence?

E. Classroom Management

Are there clearly observable classroom rules and procedures in place? How does the student teacher deal with both appropriate and inappropriate behavior? Does the management style vary with different students or types of lessons?

F. Time on Task

How are students actively involved in learning activities? Is too much time used handling discipline, getting the class started, giving and collecting homework, etc...? ASCD models of supervision may be a helpful reference.

G. Lesson Implementation

Is the lesson plan clear? Are the lesson's goals stated? Does it move smoothly from one concept to another? Did the student teacher check to see if the students understood the concepts? Does the lesson come to closure smoothly?

XII. VIDEOTAPING AS A RESOURCE

All teachers need to ask themselves "what kind of teacher am I?" One effective way is through the use of videotape. You will be able to see yourself as your students and student teacher see you and most importantly, critically examine your own classroom behavior. Having videotaped yourself you are in a better position to recommend it to interns and would be in a better position to help with it.

Once you are taped, as a first step, view it alone. This affords you the opportunity to see yourself in a global sense, i.e., to get first impressions. View it a second time and concentrate on specific areas such as body language, teaching techniques, idiosyncratic behavior, interactions with students and student responses to your teaching style and presence.

By now you might feel comfortable reviewing it with a colleague or friend. Ask them for their comments and share with them your concerns. You will learn much about yourself as a teacher. And you will be more prepared to become an effective mentor.

It is suggested that the student teacher be videotaped at three intervals. These videos might be viewed and discussed during a meeting of the student teacher and mentor.

XIII. CHALLENGING ISSUES

Cloning

Cloning is the channeling of a student teacher into a mold that is a carbon copy of the mentor. Since everyone has different personalities and abilities, it is important for the mentor to allow the student teachers to "find themselves" by encouraging the observation of other mentors and discussing the various teaching styles. Obviously the student teacher will most likely want to incorporate many of the techniques of the mentor, but student teachers that tend to copy too closely should be encouraged to experiment.

In many cases, due to specific course requirements, certain materials must be covered. Also, teachers may have other specific demands of the student teacher for the purpose of maintaining smooth transitions from mentor to student teacher and back again. These requirements should be discussed during the initial interview and the follow-up conference so that both mentor and student teacher are satisfied with the situation as it exists. Finally, a periodic review of the situation throughout the student teacher's stay can help to provide the frank, open environment which is crucial for both mentor and student teacher.

MINOR PROBLEMS

All student teachers have problems adjusting to the pace of teaching. In fact, it takes years for beginning teachers to develop a comfortable rapport with the various aspects of the field. Thus, mentors must be patient and must encourage student teachers to put difficulties aside and plug on.

It is important, however, for the mentor to monitor the student teacher carefully, discuss little problems that arise before they become big ones and point out areas of success. For example, in most cases a word about such things as a slight rise in the noise level of the class, the increasing number of students coming to class unprepared or other small, negative changes could help the student teacher to forestall a more unruly situation later and get her/him back on track.

MAJOR PROBLEMS

When a mentor's bringing of such items to the student teacher's attention does not stimulate positive results, the mentor may have to take more drastic measures. He/she must realize that, every once in a while, an student teacher may come along who does not have the personality, the ability or the drive to handle the complex tasks required of teachers. After repeated attempts at success with the supervisor, the student teacher's problems may just multiply. Every effort by the mentor working with the supervisor and site coordinator to change matters may just be in vain.

It is important that the mentor does not take such a situation personally or confront it alone. Just as even the best teachers sometimes cannot motivate certain students who have tuned out school, the best intentioned mentors may not be able to move an student teacher who refuses to do any work at home or feels he/she already knows enough and doesn't want more advice. In any case, the students cannot be left to wonder what the next day will bring; their proper education has to come first. Something major has to be done when an student teacher consistently doesn't perform up to expectations.

STRATEGIES

Several strategies are possible. First, mentors and supervisors can videotape the student teacher in action and discuss particularly negative situations in detail. So many things go through an student teacher's mind while he/she teaches, very basic problems may go unnoticed. A careful look at a tape can be a real eye-opener.

Offering strategies for the student teacher can help. Maybe a certain subject area could be better taught through the use of another instructional method. Maybe variety needs to be added to the student teacher's approach to prevent the students from getting bored easily. Co-teaching with the student teacher for a while may bring his/her confidence back. Once the class gets back on task, discipline will be easier, and maybe the student teacher can be left alone again.

PERSONALITY CONFLICTS

Most likely, the biggest problem that can come out of a mentor - student teacher situation is a personality conflict. A short interview a couple of months before the student teacher starts may not expose an underlying basic difference of opinion. For example, if a strict disciplinarian mentor pairs up with a carefree, low key student teacher, sparks may be flying every day. If the mentor feels that his/her personality may not mesh with that of the student teacher, another perspective must be added.

Contact the college supervisor and have an earlier three-way conference. He/she has had connections with many different types of student teachers and may have handled similar situations. Discuss potential problem areas in detail and work on strategy to forestall them. Keep in close contact with the supervisor, getting back together soon if things do not improve. Don't be afraid to seek advice from other mentor staff also. They, too, have had experience with different student teachers and may have run into the same situation.

EXTENSIONS

If the mentor does not feel that the student teacher will be prepared at the end of the prescribed period, the time could be extended. Extensions should not be just made arbitrarily, but sometimes student teachers just start "hitting their stride" towards the end of the prescribed period and more time can build their confidence and expertise.

OTHER OPTIONS

If matters still do not change, maybe a switch to another class with a fresh start is the solution. Sometimes rapport with a certain class never develops, though an student teacher may be effective with other classes. Change may do everyone involved a lot of good. In extreme situations a change of teaching site may be needed. If an student teacher somehow becomes the brunt of bitter animosity among the students and any efforts to bind the wounds end in failure, having him/her just go on would be pointless. Another option is a change to an independent study program that does not involve a teaching certificate, but does involve getting graduation credits. If an student teacher can not obtain success in any class at any site, it may be time for her/him to consider another career.

CONCLUSION

The collaboration between the University of Massachusetts and the East Longmeadow Schools has had positive results for the faculty and student teachers. Teachers as mentors have developed new skills in teaching and communication through the mentoring process. The faculty experienced a rejuvenation and a new dedication toward their profession. Student teachers experience an internship with trained mentors and are totally immersed in the environment of the school. Opportunities for the continued learning of new mentoring techniques continue to be offered by university instructors. The relationship between mentors is strong and a bond has developed betweeen many student teachers and mentors. Job

opportunities for student teachers is enhanced through the collaborative developed between the university and East Longmeadow. Finally, students at the high school and middle school are enriched by the eagerness and spirit of each new group of student teachers.

APPENDIX

A REMINISCENCE

one teacher's view of the mentoring experience

Rearing a child and having a student teacher have many similarities. In either case the effective development of the offspring depends heavily upon the knowledge, commitment and attitude of the parent/mentor. Also, the the parents and mentors involved usually never fully believe that they have the requisite qualities until they actually take the plunge. There is always that period of apprehension, the "I-don't-know-if-I-really-want-to-get-into-this" feeling. Once involved, however, the rewards of both endeavors become obvious. There is no greater feeling than watching your progeny grow and develop. In addition, you realize that your legacy will now reach out into the future.

There are numerous "How-To-Raise-The-Perfect-Child" manuals for budding parents. When my wife and I first brought home our baby girl, we were confident that we had all of the answers. We had perused everything on the market and even attended parenting classes. I'll never forget our shock, however, when we carried Sarah into our bedroom to christen her fancy new cradle. We realized immediately that we did not know whether to place her on her side, her back or her tummy. Panic set in. Of course, with child number two the process was much smoother.

Likewise, I remember my despair as a student teacher when I attempted to correct my first set of Great Expectations characterization essays . Though I had written countless papers in my own school days and knew the novel better than any other as it was my favorite, I had no clue about how I would deal with other people's work. Teachers eventually develop ingenious systems to do what they do. This knowledge should not remain buried in some dusty cinderblock room; it should be passed on to new generations of teachers. Mentoring assures this.

Besides knowledge commitment is crucial. In today's fast-paced world where both mom and dad work, it is hard to set aside quality time for little Jeffrey's first basketball lesson. Teachers also are bombarded with commitments. Several years ago I gave up using a little pocket calendar and opted for the giant size desk blotter one. At times, however, I still can not squeeze in all of my meeting dates. I make them though, and Jeffrey does eventually learn

how to put some spin on the basketball. The constant activity is often tiring but very enriching in the long run.

Finally, attitude is a key factor. Parents who put their child's welfare far down on their priority list hurt the child and miss a lot of memorable occasions. Watching my eight year old's enthusiasm as he streaked down the basketball court was priceless to me even though he only averaged four points a game. Similarly, a mentor whose attitude is "I can't wait to drop that E block class on my student teacher!" will miss a lot. Watching a new teacher develop from the guidelines you instill is a special feeling; those first steps, along with their inevitable fumbling, are special.

Proud new parents can never call enough people, cradle the little one long enough, or stop searching that face for a hint of their own jawline or smile. A mentor also can never part from an student teacher without a large gulp in his throat because he knows that he has given a big part of himself, has nurtured excellence and knows that whenever his progeny teaches a lesson, a little bit of the mentor will be in the room. I ran into a former student teacher of mine last year. He explained how he had meet another former student teacher of mine and started to discuss the different teaching responsibilities they each had in their separate school systems. When the question of "How do you handle..." came up, the response of each was, "I just think of what Joe would do." Knowing that there are teachers out there basing their day-to-day activities on my advice gives me a sense of accomplishment and pride that I have never felt before as an educator.

When the opportunity to mentor was first given to me, I balked; I had too much to do already. Eventually I gave in though, and what happened after that first observation by my first student teacher changed my mind forever. "Wow! How did you ever do all of those things?" the student teacher queried. I was shocked by the response. I didn't even think I did anything special. That's when I realized that I did have much to offer.

Mentoring is not simple; it is an ongoing, painstaking business.For those willing to take the plunge, however, mentoring has numerous benefits. Hopefully, the materials in this manual will help explain the process.

EAST LONGMEADOW PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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School of Education

SECONDARY TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM

COOPERATING TEACHER'S HANDBOOK

Division 2
School of Education
University of Massachusetts
Amherst, MA 01003

The University of Massachusetts is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Institution

The Secondary Teacher Education Program welcomes you as a cooperating teacher. As you have accepted a student teacher, we'd like you to know something about our program and how you fit into it. We hope this handbook will answer many of your questions before you need to ask them. Please read it through and feel free to ask any questions you may still have at the initial three-way conference.

How your student teacher has been prepared by the Secondary Teacher Education Program for student teaching

Before a student teacher begins student teaching, he or she must have met the state's Standard I (see State Standards at the end of this publication) for the subject field in which certification is sought. This assures school systems that he or she does have thorough preparation in that subject area in which the student teaching is to be done.

In addition to this, the student teacher will have had the following courses:

Work of the Middle and High School Teacher (field-based)
Education for Cultural Understanding
Educational Psychology
Language in the Middle and High School
Instructional Planning and Assessment
Teaching (English, Math, Science or Social Studies) in the Middle and High School (field-based)
Micro-teaching (field-based)

What state law and the School of Education require

1. that you as a cooperating teacher must be or once have been tenured and must hold or be specifically exempt from holding an appropriate certificate.

2. that the student teaching practicum be in the subject field at the level of the certificate sought.

3. that during the student teaching practicum three meetings will be held with the student teacher, cooperating teacher and the university supervisor present

   - an initial meeting to clarify roles, responsibilities, and objectives for student teaching
   - a meeting at the midpoint of student teaching to assess the student teacher's progress and to establish goals for the rest of the term
   - a final meeting to assess the intern's performance and learning and to complete the necessary paperwork

4. that a 14 week-long student teaching experience entailing a minimum of 300 clock hours is completed. In specific instances a student teacher may have had prior teaching experience which would have earned him or her a waiver of half the student teaching experience.

How much responsibility should the student teacher take and when?

The first two weeks that the student teacher is in your school are looked upon as an orientation period and the completion of the third pre-practicum field experiences. The student teacher has a checklist which will start to orient him or her to the school environment. With your help and the checklist the intern will be introduced to the faculty, staff and students. The checklist is designed to orient the student teacher to procedural aspects of the school. It will also expose the student teacher to the various styles of teaching within the building.

It is best to provide the student teacher with a gradual transition into teaching. (A full load is three classes, with two preparations, at various levels.) Here are some suggested steps that could help introduce the student teacher to the role of teaching:

- After introducing your student teacher to the class have him or her take the attendance, especially for the class you feel he or she will take over first.

- The student teacher may grade papers to get a feel for the range and abilities of the students.

- Start the student teacher teaching with a mini-lesson or team teaching experience.

- Let the student teacher lead small group activities within your class.

- The student teacher can then take over a class for one day; followed by a two-day lesson with the same class.

When the student teacher and the cooperating teacher feel ready, (preferably during the third week or sooner if warranted), full responsibility should be take by the student teacher for planning, teaching, and evaluating the first class. Class plans should be discussed far enough in advance with the cooperating teacher so that the cooperating teacher has ample opportunity to supply input and the student teacher has opportunity to take the input into consideration. It is hoped that a class will be selected that will allow the student teacher the best chance for initial success. During the fourth and fifth week, responsibility for the second class should be taken. The third class should be picked up during the sixth to eighth week. By this time the student teacher should be ready to take a class that poses more of a classroom management challenge. In addition to

classroom teaching experience, the student teacher should experience a full range of teaching responsibilities in the school, i.e., study hall duty, cafeteria duty, etc. The student teaching experience is a time when the student teacher is both student and teacher, and time should be allowed so that learning about planning, assessment and teaching can take place.

Substitute teaching

After a student teacher has developed some expertise and confidence in dealing with students, the university feels it is permissable if a student teacher occasionally substitutes for the cooperating teacher. In no case should substituting conflict with the student teaching responsibilities for the particular classes that the student teacher is teaching. After the student teacher is well-established in the routines of the school, he or she may be asked to substitute on occasion for other teachers within the student teacher's academic area, as long as such service is not detrimental to the student teaching experience. The student teacher may wish not to substitute at all.

Field trips

Under no circumstances should a student teacher be allowed to conduct a field trip without your supervision. The university requires your attendance.

What kind of supervision will your student teacher get from the university?

Normally, the student teacher will be observed a minimum of six times in the school setting, by a University Supervisor, if the school is within a 40 mile radius of the University. During three of these visits, the supervisor may conduct a three-way meeting with you and the student teacher. The supervisor will observe the student teacher during the classes he or she teaches and confer with the student teacher after the observation, either at the school or later at the university. Post-observational conferences are most effective and leave the student teacher with less anxiety if done as soon as possible after the observation. It would be helpful if the cooperating teacher were to take the class immediately after the observation, freeing up the student teacher. Most schools have a space (library, conference room, prep room) that the supervisor and student teacher could use for their post-observation conference.

The observational visits are supplemented by a series of bi-weekly seminar meetings that all student teacher attend. In addition to the observation and seminar meetings, student teachers are required to keep a reflective journal. Journal entries are discussed with their supervisors. Journals are the personal property of the student teacher and need only be shared as they wish.

In general, supervisors see their position as one of promoting the growth and competence of the student teacher. Although their emphasis is on supervision, they are ultimately responsible, with you, for evaluating the student teacher's performance. The supervisor is trying to promote the growth of the student teacher's individual style, helping to capitalize on strengths and minimize weaknesses. The supervisor acts most like a coach and least like a scorekeeper. Observation visits are a good time for both you and the university supervisor to check in together. This permits both of you to keep current with the student teacher's progress.

It is important to emphasize that evaluation is a joint process between you and the university supervisor and the Common Standards for classroom teachers, which are included with this handbook as the basis for evaluation. In almost all cases, the cooperating teacher and the University supervisor come to agreement on the evaluation. In those few cases where agreement is not reached, a mediator is brought to resolve the issue.

Problems

If you are experiencing any difficulties, please let the supervisor know of them. You may contact the Coordinator of Supervisors (School of Education, Secondary Teacher Education Program, 545-0619 or 545-2824). In addition, each subject area is the responsibility of the following professors:

Portia Elliott	Math	545-3421
Earl Seidman	English	545-3126
Verne Thelen	Science	545-1570
	Social Studies	545-1570

Where does the cooperating teacher fit in?

Cooperating teachers normally find that having a student teacher is a trade-off. For the extra time and concern they lend to advising, observing and conferencing, they receive some release time and fresh ideas and perspectives from the student teacher. The "trade-off" is enhanced by the fact that the university grants tuition waiver (three-credits) to the cooperating teacher of each full-time (300 hours) student teacher. This tuition waiver is transferable.

Most cooperating teachers feel this experience is one of growth for them as well as the student teacher. They use this time to reflect on their teaching. Most feel rejuvenated, find new appreciation for their own skills, and experience increased confidence and a new sensitivity to their role as a teacher.

How the student teacher feels

Student teachers often look for support in four general areas: orientation, evaluation, help with lesson planning, and discipline. In the previous years student teachers have said the following:

- "My cooperating teacher introduced me to the students right away and to other staff in the school."

- "She found ways of making me feel useful and involved that first week while I observed."

- "On my first day in class, my cooperating teacher took the most difficult student with her to clean the bookroom. That allowed me to get my feet on the ground before `the nemesis' entered the scene; he wasn't as bad as I expected."

- "When my cooperating teacher gave me prescribed lesson plans, lecture notes, and materials, I felt like it wasn't me up there."

- "I would have died of shame if my cooperating teacher had taken over during that first week when I was having trouble."

- "When my cooperating teacher showed me how to use her files and told me which other English staff were open to sharing ideas, it was like a knot was untied in my stomach."

- "The cooperating teacher prefaced critical remarks once with, `It happened to me, too. These are some ways to get around that.'"

(Quotes were collected by Linda M. Cleary, Spring `82 and Spring `84)

Matters to consider

- Outline your goals for the student teacher at the beginning of the semester and allow the student teacher to share his or her goals as well.

- Allow the student teacher to experience different levels of classes.

- Set up weekly appointments with the student teacher to review the student teacher's plans for the coming week. Provide suggestions and revisions at this time since there is time enough to incorporate these into the lesson.

- Give student teacher short-term feedback (day to day) and long-term feedback (about the relative success of an entire unit).

- Sit in the back of the room and take notes to discuss

after class. Allow the student teacher to reflect on the lesson before giving feedback.

- Be sensitive to the student teacher's reaction to negative criticism.

- Go over mistakes with the student teacher to help avoid making the same mistakes again.

- Recognize teaching as a growth process.

- Prepare student teacher for the types of discipline problems they might encounter and discuss strategies for dealing with them.

- Leave the room at appropriate times to allow the student teacher to establish his/her authority as a teacher.

- Offer materials and ideas as resources but don't insist upon the student teacher using them as you would.

- Help student teacher become familiar with what resources are available in the school and where to find them.

- Encourage the student teacher to interact with other teachers -- to observe and to work with other teachers and student teachers.

- Have patience to allow the student teacher to learn through experience.

- Encourage the student teacher to take risks.

- Collect data while observing the student teacher.

- Watch and describe what is going on in the class for the student teacher.

- Discuss with the student teacher how he or she feels about the lesson.

- Discuss your own feelings and responses to these particular events.

- Share your notes with the student teacher.

- Make planning expectations clear.

- Set aside 15 minutes daily to discuss the next day's plans.

- Focus on the student teacher strengths.

- Keep lines of communication open (with both the student teacher and the supervisor).

Lesson planning

The university urges a lesson plan to be done for each lesson. We ask cooperating teachers to work with us to carry out this expectation.

We hope the information provided here is helpful to you. We appreciate your interest and willingness to participate in this critical aspect of our profession. Our desire was to offer some guidelines and hints gathered over the years to help you define your role in helping to start a new teacher's career.

(ref: coptch.hbk 11/17/89)

Classroom Teacher. (Common Standards)

(a) Standard I. The effective teacher is knowledgeable in the field proposed for certification. (The competencies required to meet this standard are listed under each classroom teaching certificate.)

(b) Standard II. The effective teacher communicates clearly, understandably, and appropriately. To meet this standard, the candidate will demonstrate that he or she:

1. gives clear and concise explanations and directic s
2. frames questions so as to encourage inquiry
3. uses appropriate metaphors, examples, and illustrations
4. makes the goals of teaching and learning clear to students
5. uses language appropriate to the age, developmental stage, special needs, and social, racial, and linguistic background of his or her students
6. serves as an example of clear and effective oral and written communication
7. listens to students
8. communicates effectively with parents

(c) Standard III. The effective teacher designs instruction to facilitate learning consistent with the needs and interests of the learners and so as to maintain a sense of order and purpose in the classroom. To meet this standard, the candidate will demonstrate that he or she:

1. understands the needs and interests of his or her students and designs or adapts the curriculum to meet these needs and interests
2. has clear goals for student learning
3. relates the elements of instruction sequentially to each other, to other fields of knowledge, to students' experiences, and to long-term goals
4. understands developmental psychology, and relationships between stages of growth
5. uses materials, media, and techniques appropriate to the age, developmental stage, special needs, and social, racial and linguistic background of his or her students, both individually and as a class
6. uses materials, media, and techniques suited to the subject matter and to meeting the goals of instruction
7. teaches, as necessary, the basic academic skills (reading, communication, mathematics) related to the goals of instruction
8. is aware of recent developments in teaching, particularly in his or her field(s) of knowledge
9. understands techniques of classroom management and how to maintain a sense of order in the classroom
10. makes effective use of appropriate resources in the community

(d) Standard IV. The effective teacher uses the results of various evaluative procedures to assess the effectiveness of instruction. To meet this standard, the candidate will demonstrate that he or she:

1. uses evaluative procedures appropriate to the age, developmental stage, special needs, and social, racial, and linguistic background of his or her students, and corrects for any ethnic, racial, or sexual bias in evaluation
2. interprets the results of evaluative procedures, and uses these results to improve instruction both for the class as a whole and for individual students
3. identifies problems in reading which inhibit learning and works toward remedying these problems
4. encourages the involvement of students in evaluation of instruction
5. evaluates his or her own role, behavior, and performance in the classroom

(e) Standard V. The effective teacher is equitable, sensitive, and responsive to all learners. To meet this standard, the candidate will demonstrate that he or she:

1. defends and encourages the exercise of students' rights to equal treatment and freedom of expression
2. responds to the needs of individual students so as to enhance their self-esteem
3. works toward a learning environment favorable to open inquiry and devoid of ridicule
4. encourages a positive atmosphere for all students, especially those with special needs
5. avoids and discourages racial, sexual, social, ethnic, religious, physical, and other stereotyping
6. makes allowances for biases and limitations in his or her own background which limit his or her responsiveness to students from other backgrounds.